

Message Text

SECRET

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12

ACTION SS-25

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R 300410Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2521

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T ABU DHABI 0232

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, US, TC, MU

SUBJECT: BRIEFING OF UJA FOREIGN MINISTER ON SULTAN

QABUS VISIT TO US

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER SUWAIDI JANUARY 26

I USED STATE 16451 TO BRIEF HIM ON USG-OMAN DISCUSSIONS IN

WASHINGTON. ON ARMS REQUESTS I TOLD HIM MERELY THAT OMANIS

HAD SOUGHT CERTAIN ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT AND WE WERE

TRYING TO BE HELPFUL. FONMIN DID NOT PRESS FOR FUTHER DETAILS AND

I DID NOT GIVE HIM ANY. I SAID THERE WAS NO INTENTION ON PART OF USG

TO BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN OMANI MILITARY EFFORT BEYOND SUPPLYING

CERTAIN EQUIPMENT.

2. ON MASIRAH, I TOLD SUWAIDI WE HAD REQUESTED OMANI PERMISSION

FOR OCCASIONAL USE OF BRITISH AIRFIELD AND SULTAN HAD AGREED. SUWAIDI

ASKED HOW WE INTENDED TO USE ISLAND. I REPLIED DISCUSSIONS

WERE STILL UNDERWAY AND I HAD NO FURTHER DETAILS AT THIS TIME. SUWAIDI

ASKED IF OUR USE OF MASIRAH WAS RELATED TO OUR MILITARY PRESENCE IN

GULF. I SAID I DID NOT THINK SO; RATHER IT WAS RELATED TO OUR PRESENCE

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IN INDIAN OCEAN. I KNEW OF NO PLANS FOR CHANGE IN EITHER SIZE OR ACTIVITIES OF OUR SHOW-THE-FLAG SQUADRON IN GULF WHICH HE KNEW ALL ABOUT.

3. SUWAIDI SAID HE WAS SORRY TO SEE NAVAL "ARMS RACE" TAKE PLACE BETWEEN US AND SOVIETS IN INDIAN OCEAN. I SAID US DID NOT WANT ARMS RACE EITHER, BUT WE WERE CONFRONTED BY STEADY GROWTH OF SOVIET NAVAL POWER IN INDIAN OCEAN IN RECENT YEARS. WE HAD GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS RESPECT AND WE DID NOT SEE IT TO BE IN EITHER OUR OWN INTEREST

OR INTEREST OF OUR FRIENDS IN AREA TO HAVE A SOVIET FLEET IN THE AREA AND NO US PRESENCE. SUWAIDI SAID WE WERE TALKING ABOUT TWO EVILS, BUT OF DIFFERING MAGNITUDE. ARMS RACE IN AREA WAS BAD OF ITSELF, BUT HE HAD TO ADMIT HE WOULD BE MORE UNHAPPY TO SEE SOVIETS CRUISING AROUND ALONE.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SUWAIDI DID NOT CRITICIZE US USE OF MASIRAH FACILITY, HIS LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR ANY SUPERPOWER MILITARY PRESENCE IN AREA CAME THROUGH IN THIS CONVERSATION. HE NEVERTHELESS SEEMED TO ACCEPT ARGUMENT THAT IT WOULD NOT BE IN UAE INTEREST FOR SOVIETS TO BE ONLY MILITARY PRESENCE IN AREA.

STERNER

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NNN

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